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# Pro Rege

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Volume 33  
Number 2 *Fine Arts Issue* 2004

Article 22

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December 2004

## Visions From the Four Seasons

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### Recommended Citation

Bajema, Clifford E. (2004) "Visions From the Four Seasons," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 33: No. 2, 29 - 33.  
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# Visions From The Four Seasons

*Clifford E. Bajema*

## Summer Cottonwoods

“Shshsh,” whisper the Cottonwoods,  
their weathered trunks, like a huddle of grandparents, bending  
to the sway of deep conversation, reminiscing,  
their cottony spray whitening the dunes.

Infant leaves play nearby, clusters of innocence,  
all uniformed in green, none outstanding,  
fluttering in frenzied dance,  
far still from autumn change.

## Autumn Cottonwoods

Gazing out dreamily on a splendid autumn morning,  
I see through squinting eyes a sun-lit cottonwood grove, its  
leaves blinking like miniature Christmas lights, shimmering  
and flickering against a powder-blue canopy of sky.  
With my age-ripened imagination ambered past mid-life,  
I perceive in personified leaves my beloved grandchildren,  
some still green with infancy, some turned golden  
with the brush strokes of passing years splashing yellow.  
Gaily and nimbly, they flutter in circles, prancing in place,  
as though wind-inspired into dizzying dance,  
while we, their seasoned grandparents, stand stately  
in support, yet also slightly bowing and bending  
with the knowing sway of earth-bound seniors  
holding up the younger generations above.

## Winter Apparition

My computer is asleep.  
Before I touch the key, returning  
to a netscape of automation and information,  
to monitors, managers and modems,  
users, savers and setups,  
controls, connectors and calculators,  
I chance to see in the screen  
an apparition of white,  
like the image of an old man,  
snow-covered.

From a black screen,  
as though through a glass darkly,  
the vision comes.

I see a face,  
the likeness of myself,  
not a Mt. Rushmore enlargement  
of some outstanding nation-founder  
glowing in the summer sun.

The face is more Alpine,  
more like a solitary peak,  
its rocky features barely visible  
through the blizzard,  
its frozen lines like strands  
of a silver chain  
running down into the folds  
of its white garment  
and converging into a lake  
of crystal below,  
shaped by many decades  
into the likeness of a cross.

This seems not to be a time  
for more enlightenment,  
not a time for brilliant words  
and pretty pictures,  
for endless news  
and petty games.

Let Microsoft sleep awhile,  
while I rest awake,  
seeing in these winter shadows  
a white garment,  
a silver chain,  
a cross.

## **Spring Visions**

### **1. The Cross**

Iron was not suited,  
nor stone,  
for making a cross.

Just had to be wood:  
pocked with amber, oval eyes,  
etched in orange, red blood lines  
descending in cardiographic peaks and sweeps.

Just had  
to be wood,  
to fit the sacrifice.

### **2. The Antique**

Ancient torture-rack,  
with awesome history  
and thorn-carved signature –  
truly a thing of beauty now!

By celestial design,  
horizon-stretched,  
earth-sunk  
and soiled.

Finish, perfect:  
blood-stained and sealed,  
body rubbed,  
with an age-deepened patina.

Time and eternity join  
at the intersection of mystery,  
where wisdom begins  
as life ends.

## **For All Seasons: Borrowed Eyes**

It was the Lord's Day  
when my thoughts took flight.

And I saw, as it were, a likeness of God.  
There was a huge hand holding a very wide heart.

The heart was crimson red,  
covered with a thousand translucent eyes,  
like white, emerald and purple sapphires.

Some turned inward;  
some were in sabbath repose;  
others looked outward in all directions.

And a second hand took me up into its vast strength.  
Its warmth and gentle pressure liquefied me,  
and I was poured into the all-seeing eyes.

Settled deep into the heart of God,  
my sense of body returned,  
but I felt no desire to stand.  
Lying prostrate on the heart's inner face,  
and supported by the comfort of His thousand eyes,  
I was amazed at what I could see.

The earth came into view,  
and upon it appeared a thousand living things.  
Each creature stood out with such clarity  
that it seemed as though a single eye of God were upon it,  
watching it day and night,  
magnifying its every instinct or thought,  
tracing its every movement,  
hearing its distinct cries, however faint,  
peering into its face,  
even counting the fibers or feathers on its body.

I saw a baby Robin fallen from its nest,  
cowering and chirping in fear of an approaching cat.  
I saw an adolescent man in his jail cell  
throwing up on the cement floor,  
sickened by sexual molestation.  
I saw a mother and father wailing in a birthing room  
over their still-born baby.

I saw into a dark grotto  
where a small pot of watery gruel,  
supposed to feed a family of twelve,  
was cooking over a fire of burning dung.  
I saw a man, behind the closed doors of a plush office,  
downloading pictures of his favorite fetish.  
I saw an aneurysm developing in a mother's brain,  
poised in a few minutes to blow its cerebral fuse,  
while children stood by helplessly.

For the brief moment of the dream  
I thought: All my life  
I have seen heaven from earth.  
I have worshipped,  
I have adored,  
I have praised.

But now, with borrowed eyes  
and bended gaze,  
my worship is leveled,  
my adoration refracted,  
my praise is returned  
in lament.

It was the Lord's Day  
when my thoughts took flight.  
I saw earth from heaven.

All was changed  
that Day.